

Edgartown Martha's Vineyard

March 8<sup>th</sup> 1847

My Dear, I am on this solitary island, in sour weather without you. But it is solitary only because I am among strangers when I wish to be at home. The last week has been doleful to me. I was three days at Opponizansett most all to my liking. & I am here for a longer or shorter time as circumstances may determine. If matters move happily I shall stay a week at least. My lecture tonight, before the Lyceum of this place will settle the question. The people seem to be very intelligent & I have been waited on by several men of fine talents & liberal sentiments who are very desirous to hear a course of lectures. Among them is a young gentleman by the name of Pease, who is a painter and draftsman to the Government. He spends a good deal of time at Washington. He is a Swedenborgian, & is fully sick of all that he sees among the politicians at Washington. He says there is nothing to be expected from them but corruption, treachery to their parties & betrayal of the country. He is a very fine gentleman. He is acquainted with the movements of Mr. Owen at the Capital which he related to me in part. All will depend upon my lecture tonight. If I am happy in my effort there will be a great interest. for I am told the people are exceedingly excitable. That is not however a favorable omen in my opinion. It will do well for a time. But too suddenly heated, there will be danger of their becoming too suddenly cold. I am not quite so well as I should like to be but I am going to take time to prepare myself for a grand speech!! I must hold up writing for the present & go a rambling on my theme. I must impress the people favorably to night. Meant while pray for my success. Oh how I wish you were here to sit right before me all the while I am lecturing. It would inflame my fancy, quicken thought & liberate speech. But let us wait in hope. Not verron



2  
Tuesday Morning. Well I succeeded so well in my lecture evening  
that I am to stay tonight. I gave a capital lecture for an in-  
troduutory one. You will put the right meaning upon this. I have  
a right to tell you how well I do, without the charge of egotism.  
But I shall most likely have the pleasure of footing my own bills  
here. I am obliged to stop at a hotel, and the people seem  
wretched fearful of taxation. But there are intelligent people  
here & Swedenborgianism is beginning to take root here  
& it seems important to introduce Association at the ex-  
position & interpreting of the New Church mysteries. I do not  
think anything immediate will come of my lectures  
but they will be a basis for something by & by. Last night  
I gave an entirely new lecture from any that I ever gave  
before, showing the necessity of a social reform. It was upon  
the nine scourges of civilized society. Tonight I shall speak  
on Affliction as the remedy. I am willing to stay as long as  
the best interest of the cause demands if it be a fortnight. But  
I am impatient to be at home. You must not expect me  
at all however, for I cannot tell when I shall be able to be with  
you. I had a most pressing invitation to go to Manchester  
last evening at the close of my lecture. The gentleman said  
there were a great many friends there who would give  
me a hearty welcome. If we go to Manchester at all before  
the May meeting I don't know but we had better go now. By  
the way I think I was obliged to leave New Bedford in such haste, that  
I forgot to have your letters forwarded to me here, & it will be  
two long days before I can hear from you. Your letters after  
the receipt of this, would not probably reach home until I  
should have left the island. It is possible that I may be at New  
Bedford on Friday evening. It will depend on Allen's meeting  
me on the buryard, as we talked a week ago when we par-  
ted. I have spent a long time with a young man this morning from  
Charleston, S.C. who was away from the whole ship & landed at  
the Sandwich Islands. <sup>Now</sup> that is the ship which Frank Cabot  
is on board of. He left the Florida & secured himself on the ship  
York which was bound home. When the York was well out  
to sea he came from his hiding place. He is a College educated  
is a passionate lover of music & plays with a great deal of appre-  
ciation Beethoven Mozart Paganini & Thalberg. I was much pleased  
with his intelligence but I think he has been a hard case. He is un-  
doubtedly a talented fellow with a good share of vanity. He kept  
all his clothing except the coarse sailor suit which he had on when  
he got round from house to house in his horrible dress & is wel-  
comed by all. He gave me a whalebone ring with a Californian pearl  
set, I suppose it is of no value. nor is there any beauty about it except  
in the pearl. But I like it.  
He gave me a very pleasant account of Frank saying that he



was well & happy & was well liked by the captain & officers. He speaks well of all the crew - says they all have some gentility in their manner & any as active a crew as he ever saw. He thinks Groat will do well - ~~that~~ <sup>say</sup> he has a friend on board by the name of Somers who is his most intimate friend. This young man's name is Berlin & left the ship last September. The Florida had then but a very small part of her cargo. He thinks that Groat will leave, if ~~the~~ <sup>they</sup> ~~about~~ <sup>about</sup> complete ~~their~~ <sup>their</sup> cargo, this year. But he does not know anything about it. This will be pleasant to ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Cobots. I learned all this by accident. I was conversing with the mate of the York on the subject of whaling & mentioned that I had a friend on board the Florida. He then told me of this young man & this morning I looked him up.

I don't think I ever made a more unpleasant tour than this has been in many things. At Mattapoisett we were well loved to death by a ~~man~~ <sup>man</sup> of a universalist minister, who was anxious to see down himself in our estimation by acting the pious fool, for having represented me as an infidel after my first lecture there. We had no peace with him for he would have us stop with him & his tongue was busy with idle chatter. I tried to read Don Quixote which I found among his books & told him he must excuse my reading it for it was new to me & I was intensely interested. So on leaving his house he offered to lend his Quixote, two volumes of which I took & you can't imagine what a comfort they have been to me in the general dearth of society, & sour & stormy weather. I have met with it is really one of the most interesting books that I ever read. Cervantes was really a prodigy. Don Quixote & his squire Sancho were as great curiosities of the Egyptian Museum. I spend what little time I can get in the study of the great & chivalrous character of that notable Knight of the sorrowful countenance. Thus you see that my voracious life is not wholly diverted from literature. How accomplished I shall soon become under my present favorable circumstances will be matter of conjecture in various quarters. How do you get on in the study of French? It is too bad that I am denied all the pleasure of your reading. I don't see but banishment is my sentence. It is a hard fate, but I will show that it can be endured if so it be. You may be assured that I am growing unbearably homesick & shall be on my way home as soon as I can persuade myself that I can in conscience. Isn't that a pretty speech? What right have duty and attraction to conflict?



out of their disgust and hatred of the present order of things, I  
am willing to sacrifice myself in sapping and mining its  
foundations. What is the use in making Mexican bombs to  
blow up San Juan d'Illota. There is work enough nearer home.  
But this is nonsense, we cannot blow up anything. We can only  
supersede - substitute the true for the false. The great soul  
of the universe will mould all things after its ideal & it is for us  
to read wisely the facts of our age. We cannot propound axioms.  
That is the business of the Sphinx. It is for us to answer, with  
the sidelle which she asks at. The true soul is always calm  
& serene. & a foolish impatience does never demoralize over it.  
The world is a great game of foot-ball, but deeper than that  
lies an eternal purpose which the ages shall fulfil. Man  
works truly, only as he works from that purpose. Master  
myself, and thou hast done much towards mastering the  
world. Stand alone in audience with the great impersonal <sup>soul</sup> and  
thou shalt learn the deep wisdom. and in it shalt see thy work  
and gather the energy for it. Our little life belittles us. We  
swim around on the surface of the sea. but we never explore  
its depths. We grasp at the purple bubbles, which burst in the  
air, we scornfully dive to the bottom where lie strown the rich  
est pearls. Our poor communions what are! we meet  
man & go from him a greater stranger than before we  
met. Those we call friends. we fondle them in our arms  
& we go from them empty. We have sucked together the airy  
bubbles of privacy & sensualism. We have never bathed to-  
gether, in the ocean of infinite being, nor feasted on the nectar  
of the gods. Blessed child, there is a common ground whereon we  
may ever meet. It is that of the impersonal beauty - the world of  
enchantment, which is the real world.

It is cleaving up. I hope we shall have fair weather, yet. At any rate  
be it fair within. Be careful of your health - your eyes - your head  
& due time, hope to see me. mean while I fling you a kiss, in welcome  
of the Spring. Flora will soon love you, her exquisite laughing flower.  
We will have a stroll when I see you, if the weather is fine. I have many  
a fine walk by the ~~beach~~ sea - I meet you always there & in all  
great & pure thoughts. Give my love to all our dear folks  
You can scarcely tell how I long to see them. Be with me in  
the real life. Even thine own John